

ANGIE CHEN BUTTON



The State of Texas
House of Representatives



June 7, 2013

Friends,

At the conclusion of the Regular Session of the Texas Legislature, Governor Perry immediately convened a Special Session to address redistricting. At Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott's urging, Perry ordered lawmakers to pass "legislation which ratifies and adopts the interim redistricting plans" used in the 2012 election. These maps seek to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act and to strengthen the state's case in Federal Court.

In 2011, the Texas Legislature passed new Texas House, Senate, and Congressional maps required as a result of the 2010 Census. Because Texas is one of a handful of states that must get pre-clearance for any changes to election maps, a federal court in Washington, D.C. began reviewing the legislative districts, and a San Antonio Federal Court drew their own version of the maps and those were used in the last election cycle and are still in effect today. Governor Perry and Attorney General Abbott are now seeking to make these lines permanent in order to bring certainty to our elections and to ratify maps that were court-drawn in order to end ongoing litigation.

The Redistricting Committees of the House and Senate are currently holding legislative hearings on these interim maps. Legislators will soon debate the proposals that emerge from this process and will vote on permanent maps to send to the Governor for his signature.



Discussing Legislation with Governor Perry During the Final Days of the 83rd Legislative Session

The 83rd Regular Session

During the 83rd Legislative Session, the Texas House made great advancements and adopted beneficial public policy for Texas taxpayers. We passed historic legislation reforming our education system, addressing Medicaid fraud, requiring drug testing prior to receiving state unemployment benefits, and providing financial security for our retired teachers. We worked hard to chip away at accounting gimmicks that have hurt our budgetary process making the budget more transparent. Both the House and the Senate took responsible, necessary steps to fund our water infrastructure and lower taxes on Texas companies.

I am pleased to say that we balanced the state's budget without imposing new taxes. Last session, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, we made very deep and difficult cuts to the state budget. This session, legislators made public and higher education funding a priority by coming close to restoring the level of funding from the previous budget by allocating 54% of General Revenue to educate the next generation. As we have discussed many times over the years, a qualified work force is essential for economic development. Thanks to a healthy Texas economy and strong fiscal discipline, we were able to dedicate more money to our legislative priorities like education.

Texas is a leader in job-creation because Texans consistently stand strong on the principles of low taxation, a stable and predictable regulatory environment, and a fair court system. As a result, Texas leads the nation in new jobs and was recently named the Best State for Business by *Chief Executive* magazine for the ninth consecutive year. In ranking after ranking, Texas is at the top for business climate, fastest growing cities, and job growth. Texas leaders know that government does not create jobs, businesses do. This session I served on the Ways and Means Committee and I am

very proud of the pro-business tax relief initiatives totaling close to \$1 billion that we passed. I will continue to work hard to ensure Texas remains on top.

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative. Please continue to communicate your views on issues that are important to you.

Sincerely,

Angie Chen Button

If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing, please e-mail Angie.Button@house.state.tx.us.